

OPINION 2338 (Case 3580)***Exechocentrus lancearius* Simon, 1889 (Arachnida, Araneae, ARANEIDAE): a neotype designated**

Abstract. The Commission has replaced the holotype of *Exechocentrus lancearius* Simon, 1889, which was an incomplete specimen, with a neotype.

Keywords. Nomenclature; taxonomy; Arachnida; Araneae; ARANEIDAE; MASTOPHORINAE; *Exechocentrus*; *Exechocentrus lancearius*; bolas spiders; Madagascar.

Ruling

- (1) Under the plenary power the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature has set aside all previous type fixations for the name *lancearius* Simon, 1889, as published in the binomen *Exechocentrus lancearius*, and designated as neotype the female specimen ZMUC00021482 deposited in the Zoological Museum, Natural History Museum of Denmark, University of Copenhagen.
- (2) the name *lancearius* Simon, 1889, as published in the binomen *Exechocentrus lancearius* and as defined by the neotype designated in (1) above, has been placed on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology.

History of Case 3580

An application to set aside all previous type fixations for the name *Exechocentrus lancearius* Simon, 1889 and to designate as neotype the female specimen ZMUC00021482 deposited in the Zoological Museum, University of Copenhagen was received from N. Scharff (*Zoological Museum, Natural History Museum of Denmark, University of Copenhagen*) and G. Hormiga (*The George Washington University, Department of Biological Sciences, 20203 G St. NW, Washington D.C. 20050, U.S.A.*) on 3 January 2012. After correspondence the case was published in BZN 69: 88–91 (June 2012). The title, abstract and keywords of the case were published on the Commission's website. No comments were received on this case.

Decision of the Commission

On 1 December 2013 the members of the Commission were invited to vote on the proposals published in BZN 69: 90. At the close of the voting period on 1 March 2014 the votes were as follows:

Affirmative votes – 20: Alonso-Zarazaga, Ballerio, Bouchet, Brothers, Grygier, Halliday, Harvey, Kottelat, Krell, Kullander, Lamas, Lim, Minelli, Pape, Patterson, van Tol, Winston, Yanega, Zhang and Zhou.

Negative votes – 5: Bogutskaya, Fautin, Kojima, Rosenberg and Štys.

Ng and Pyle were on leave of absence.

Voting AGAINST, Bogutskaya said that she considered the case premature and that she thought that there might be other methods in the future to reveal more traits

(including molecular) to link a species to this name. Also voting AGAINST, Fautin said that she would have voted in favour but it seemed the case, as published, provided incomplete information. The authors appeared to recognize they cannot simply declare a neotype while a published holotype exists, yet they seemed to have done so, she added. Voting FOR, Grygier said that the current holotype was probably inadequate, but he voted only reluctantly to replace it. Contrary to the spirit of Article 75.3.2, the diagnostic features of the proposed neotype were given only as vague generalities, and there was no statement of intent to publish a detailed taxonomic paper on this genus elsewhere [Editor's note: such a work was published, as cited herein below]. It was also not stated whether the holotype was a likely candidate (i.e. in alcohol or not) for successful taxonomic bar-coding, for instance by sequencing a non-diagnostic limb joint, whereby the need for a neotype might be diminished. Pape, voting FOR, said that he had taken into account the qualifying conditions (Article 75.3) of the proposed neotype presented by Scharff & Hormiga (2012) in *Arthropod Systematics & Phylogeny*, **70**(2): 107–118. Voting AGAINST, Kojima noted that even if *Exechocentrus lancearius* Simon, 1889 could not be determined from the holotype based on the available characters, judging from the proposal, the stability and universality of the name *lancearius* was not, at least currently, threatened, hence the designation of a neotype was not necessary. Krell, although voting FOR, said that the case seemingly did not fulfil the requirement stated in Article 75.3.2 for 'a statement of the characters that the author regards as differentiating from other taxa'. It was stated in the case only that the neotype had an abdomen and genitalia, but these characters were not described. He considered that Article 75.3.2. required a description of those characters, not just a statement that they existed. Voting AGAINST, Rosenberg said that the application stated that a neotype was needed for nomenclatural stability, but it had not made a case for it. There seemed to be no doubt about the identity of the genus, because of its distinctive morphology, although the type species became a nomen dubium with the discovery of additional members of the genus. The application did not mention that the authors had submitted a description of one of these new species as *E. madilina* Scharff & Hormiga, 2012 (see above). Even if the neotype designation they proposed was not approved, their new species would remain valid, because *E. lancearius* was a nomen dubium until such time as new data allowed it to be identified. If their new species proved to be a synonym of *E. lancearius*, perhaps with DNA sequencing data, there would be no issue of stability as both names had been rarely used. If it was not a synonym, the older name would remain available for use for another species, he added.

Original references

The following are the original references to the name placed on an Official List by the ruling given in the present Opinion:

lancearius, *Exechocentrus*, Simon, 1889, *Annales Société Entomologique de France*, (6)**8**: 227.